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let's ride  
the air today

# let's ride the air today

Poems from the Dillon County Total Arts Program

Poetry and Creative Writing Component

Edited by Joanna Cattonar and Shaun Farragher

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South Carolina Arts Commission  
Columbia, South Carolina

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## PREFACE

During the 1976-77 school year, Dillon County brought professional artists in music, poetry, dance, theatre, and crafts into its schools and communities. Through Total Arts Programming, the Dillon Area Arts Council and the three school districts worked cooperatively to make the arts and quality arts experiences accessible to persons of all ages throughout the county.

By making songs, dances, plays, weavings, pots, poems and stories, participants discovered and reaffirmed their own creativity. Students frequently continued making art during "free" time after school and often parents, some of which were participants in afternoon or evening workshops, came to schools during the day to assist artists in the classrooms as volunteer aides or apprentices.

Two poets - Joanna Cattonar and Shaun Farragher - came to live and work in Dillon through this Total Arts Program. Students at the county's four primary schools worked with Shaun Farragher for one week each. Ms. Cattonar conducted classes with older students at Lake View and The Learning Center for two weeks each and at Latimer and Gordon Elementary Schools, four weeks each. Junior high and high school students and interested adults met in after-school and evening writing workshops conducted by each of the poets.

The writing included in Let's Ride The Air Today is some of the most representative from these school and community workshops.

Other work by Dillon County students is published in Things That Move The Silence, an anthology featuring photographs and writing from all the South Carolina Total Arts Program Sites: Elloree, Greenwood, Dillon County, Lancaster County, Chester, Fort Mill, and Oconee County. Interested persons may request a copy at no charge from the South Carolina Arts Commission.

## FUNDING

National Endowment for the Arts  
South Carolina Arts Commission  
Dillon School District #1  
Dillon School District #2  
Dillon School District #3  
Dillon Area Arts Council

## SOUTH CAROLINA ARTS COMMISSIONERS

Mr. Douglas A. Smith, Chairman  
Dr. John Baker, Florence  
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Mr. Dick Goldberg, Professional Arts Development  
Division Director  
Ms. Scott Sanders, Arts in Education Division Director

## DILLON AREA ARTS COUNCIL

Dr. John Parham, Chairman  
Ms. Ann Parrott, President



## PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

Dillon County School District #1 - Lake View Schools  
Mr. Harry M. Lowder, Superintendent

Lake View Elementary  
Mr. Alexander Wilson, Principal  
Ms. Edith Rogers, Coordinator

Dillon County School District #2 - Dillon City Schools  
Dr. R. Mike Simmons, Superintendent  
Mr. Van Horton, Director of Instruction

East Primary  
Mr. Ray Rogers, Principal  
Ms. Emma Lucius, Coordinator

Gordon Elementary  
Mr. Ed Roberts, Principal  
Ms. Bonita Berry, Coordinator

South Primary  
Mr. Dolphus Carter, Principal  
Ms. Sally Crumpler, Coordinator

Stewart Heights Primary  
Mr. Frank Lee, Principal  
Ms. Jean Miles, Coordinator

The Learning Center  
Mr. Ulysses Madison, Principal  
Ms. Nannie MacDonald, Coordinator

Dillon County School District #3 - Latta Schools  
Mr. John A. Jones, Superintendent

Latimer Elementary  
Mr. R.L. McBryde, Principal  
Ms. Joyce Bethea, Coordinator

Latta Primary  
Ms. Happy Boozer, Principal  
Ms. Sally Parham, Coordinator

\*work from Latta High School is also included;  
due to a change in scheduling during the gas  
shortage, Mr. Farragher worked in the school  
for several days.

In these poems and stories you are about to read you will hear children's voices talking about experiences and feelings that cover the whole spectrum - some funny, serious, romantic, irritated, thoughtful, whimsical, sad - and you will hear them very much as I did in the classroom this past semester.

I try to react as much as possible during the class hour, asking the same kind of question time and again - "-and then what happened?" "-would you say it just this way?" - in search of the unforgettable image, the natural turn of phrase, the unconscious and unself-conscious revelation that is the essence of art. I encourage students to bring to bear who they are and what they may do outside the classroom, dream-images, early memories, felt experience, word play. And I've been continually surprised and delighted by what they have done in response to assignments I've given that probably seemed, in the ordinary context of schoolwork, unconventional and maybe a little wierd: I have asked them to listen to records, to follow a mind-trail of associated words, to draw a design and get into it any way they could think of - they "fell," they "drifted," "ate" their way - and then described where they found themselves.

For example, Karen Sweat's "Rainbow" came about after she drew a multi-colored picture one morning at Lake View School. She went to the middle of her drawing and brought us back a rainbow.

Although space limitations have prevented sharing more work with you, I'm sure that the stories and poems that appear in the following pages amply illustrate the range and depth of artistic talent to be found throughout the schools in Dillon County. I think you're going to enjoy hearing these voices - for their vitality and freshness - and for the self you'll recognize in them.



Joanna Cattonar  
Co-Editor

The writing in Let's Ride the Air Today shows us that the mixture of real and imaginary images extends our senses. If we can see in our mind's eye "clouds walking on Main St." or "snow like squirrels sitting on trees," perhaps next time we look at a squirrel or Main Street, we will see it differently.

Our imagination adds to what we know. The creative person wants to learn because she or he needs the information to continue to explore the imagination. It's a circle that supports the lifelong need to learn.

My role in the classroom as an artist is to help children towards self-mastery so that they may reach their own identity. What a poet or artist does when working in schools is more than the stimulation of good poems or the discovery of the gifted writer. We work as all educators to help children gain greater self-confidence and a positive self-image.

Art is not a luxury but a way by which we affirm our humanity. It is our link to all our history and roots. I have enjoyed working and living in your community. You have made me feel at home. I want to thank all the teachers and children for all their wondrous poems and stories. I want to encourage them and you to see more and to write new poems so your dreams will help you find yourself, and a life's work that you love as much as I love mine.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Shaun Farragher". The script is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized 'S' at the beginning and a long, sweeping underline that extends across the signature.

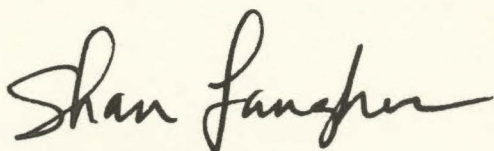
Shaun Farragher  
Co-Editor

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Shaun Farragher  
Co-Editor



COMEON BABY!

Once I had a dream  
One day I saw the clouds  
walk on Main Street.

They said,  
COMEON BABY--  
Let's ride the air today.

Katheryn Cromartie  
Grade 3  
East Primary

## BUTTERFLY

A butterfly can't bite.  
It flies outside  
and has little butterfly friends.

James Eagle  
The Learning Center

## THE APPLE TREE

Dreams about  
children  
picking apples off it  
and red birds  
making nests inside  
and woodpeckers  
pecking holes in its trunk,  
but most of all  
it remembers  
the apple blossom smell

Annie McCall  
Grade 6  
Gordon Elementary

## MARCH

March is like a floating swan  
Who has come out of the dawn.

Bonnie Bethea  
Grade 5  
Gordon Elementary

## THE TULIP

The tulip grows high in the sky.  
A man keeps watering it.  
Every day a bird comes and  
looks at the tulip  
and the man looks at the tulip  
and it keeps on growing.

Carl Snead  
The Learning Center

## JANUARY THROUGH OCTOBER

January feels like a snow bird eating bird feed  
February feels like a plane without wings  
March feels like a vacant lot  
April feels like a kid's new bicycle tearing up  
May feels like a sailboat sinking  
June feels like a mushroom being squashed  
    between your toes  
July feels like a splash of cold water hitting your body  
August feels like babies crying  
September feels like a cold summer day  
October feels like Paul Revere riding down a road

Wesley Skipper  
Grade 5  
Lake View Elementary

## EASTER LILY

Easter lily  
Easter lily  
I know your like, Easter lily.  
I know you hide, Easter lily,  
every day

Shirlean Williams  
Grade 5  
Gordon Elementary



POEM

The daisy  
was all pretty  
and the winter  
came and broke it.

Clyde Bailey  
Grade 2  
East Primary

THE RAIN IS

The rain is  
raining on the sun  
and the turtle  
is getting the birds.

The monster is  
stealing  
the sun  
and eating the birds.

It's dark.

Jerry James Robinson  
The Learning Center

HEAT WAVES

When I look into the waves  
of heat I see a ghost in my dream.

Shannon Brooks  
Grade 3  
South Primary

I FEEL LIKE A BONE MY DOG'S CHEWING ON

I am buried  
at a graveyard  
your spirit comes up  
scares people to death in Hell  
You scare them to be quiet.

Judy, Robert Lenny, Tim  
Grade 3  
South Primary

## RAINBOW

In the middle of a rainbow  
I walk I walk I hear a great voice  
It is my father calling me home  
Come home Come home, Karen

Karen Sweat  
Grade 5  
Lake View Elementary

I feel like ants are crawling  
all around inside of me,  
and I could run until it stops.  
Big worms start crawling through  
my toes. And then that night time  
comes. I can't sleep. It feels  
like birds inside, and they sing  
and they sing and they sing.

Rhonda Hamilton  
Grade 3  
South Primary

## POEM

If I was a rock  
I would roll around the world  
and nothing could stop me.

Doug Moultrie  
Grade 3  
East Primary

## DAYS OF THE WEEK

On Sunday I feel like a preacher  
On Monday I feel like a wash cloth  
On Tuesday I feel like a broken screw  
On Wednesday I feel like I'm swimming  
On Thursday my voice feels like a broken record  
On Friday I feel like a dusty chalkboard  
On Saturday I feel like Babe Ruth

Douglas Jackson  
Grade 5  
Gordon Elementary

## A MARTIAN IN THE MAGIC MIRROR

I saw a Martian in the Magic Mirror. He looked like a human person, but even so we can't see things that he can see.

He can look inside people and see bones and guts and inside your brain he can see a brain. Inside the brain he can see things moving around, the things that make you think -- little machines that look like adding machines. And he can see in your ear and he sees little machines that make you hear -- they look like typewriters.

Christine Jones  
The Learning Center



## MAGIC MIRROR

I looked in the magic mirror  
and I saw me as a heart.  
I was red and had an arrow through me.

Linda Washington  
Grade 4  
Lake View Elementary

## WHAT'S GOING ON INSIDE

I feel like I want to hit myself  
like a flying tree  
I want to burst in pieces  
just like lost butterflies.

Frank Strohlein  
Grade 3  
East Primary

### WHEN I'M LONESOME

I feel like a busted-up train  
I feel like a hungry pig  
I feel like a wild horse  
I feel like a mean witch  
I feel like a rotten pear  
I feel like a dying rose  
I feel like a dead poem

Donna Summerford  
Grade 6  
Gordon Elementary

### BAD FEELINGS

I feel like a melted piece of plastic  
I feel like a wild bull  
I feel like a shot-up hog  
I feel like a zig-zagged word

Darren Johnson  
Grade 5  
Lake View Elementary

LION'S MOUTH

I feel like a boy who was born in the lion's mouth.

Anonymous  
Grade 4  
Gordon Elementary

SOMETIMES

I feel like a bar of candy with a bite  
out of it.

Deborah Hines  
Grade 4  
Gordon Elementary

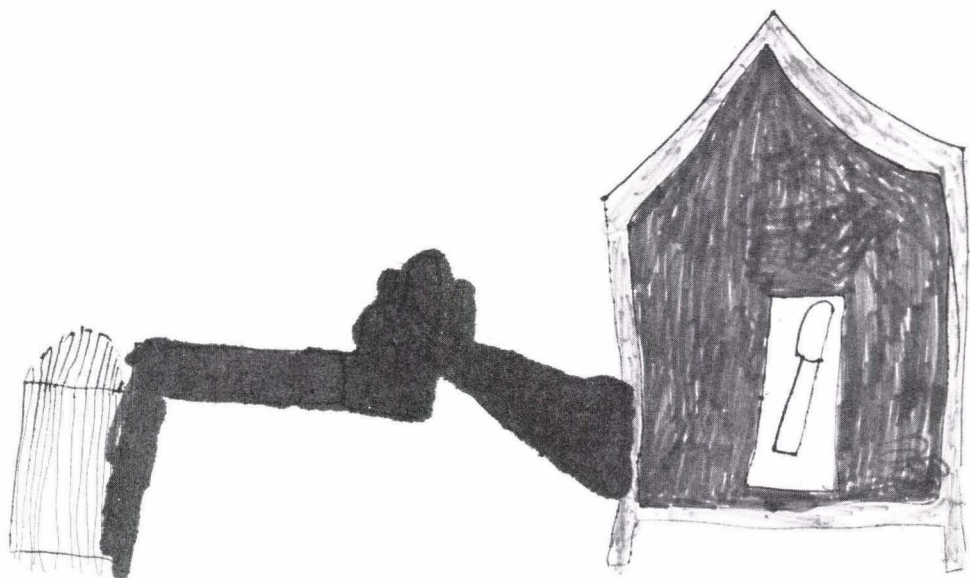
HEART

I feel like a heart in the middle of a road.

Shirley Gibson  
Grade 5  
Lake View Elementary

I feel like a pearl that has just been eaten  
by a goat.

Christopher Galloway  
Grade 6  
Latimer Elementary



#### DUMB PICTURES

I got in a picture  
I killed a bird  
I don't know why  
I felt like a nerd  
I jumped out to stay and  
I felt gay  
Everything alive left from the picture.

Drawing and poem by Geoffrey McLean, Grade 2,  
Stewart Heights Primary

I feel like a bull's  
pulling my hair.  
He knocks me deep into the water,  
then my heart beats sick  
like a condemned man  
throwing bombs in me  
then my knee breaks.

Stephanie Janell Huggins  
Grade 3  
South Primary

#### FEELING HAPPY

I feel like a happy deer running through the woods.  
I feel like a happy rooster crowing in the morning.  
I feel like a happy wolf on the mountain howling.  
I feel like a happy pony running down the road.  
I feel like a happy goat bumping into the barn.  
I feel like four cows bumping their heads together.

Jimmy Ray Carmichael  
The Learning Center

I feel like a tick  
that's going to burst in my heart  
and a bionic woman, she's in my  
skin. And a "goldman" crawling  
in my octopus legs around him.  
And I turn him into a "Booboo,  
ahhhhhhhhh."

Denise White  
Grade 3  
South Primary

## GUM DROPS OF RAIN

I feel like rain inside, wet  
I would fill up with water  
that doesn't have any color  
Like a watermelon I'm gonna  
burst up, I'm so fat, bubbly,

Gum drops of rain

It drowns me  
I have a rainbow.

Debby, Shirley, Terry, Mary Ann  
Grade 3  
South Primary

## AN APPLE TREE. A BUTTERFLY

I feel like an apple tree swinging  
in the wind and turning round and round.

I feel like a butterfly flying in  
the air with flowers on my mind.

Regena Townsend  
Grade 5  
Lake View Elementary



## COLOR IS DREAMING

Color is dreaming  
Red is dreaming I wish I could color everything  
Green is wishing I do not want to color anything  
Orange is wishing it had a birthday  
Blue is dreaming it could fly  
Brown wishes it could swim  
Yellow wishes it could learn  
Black is dreaming I wish I was dead  
Purple is dreaming I wish I was long gone

Jeffrey Scott  
Grade 5  
Gordon Elementary

## INSIDE MY HEAD

Inside my head  
is a big round thing  
with holes in it,  
a chair, some  
ketchup, some  
blood, a big bottle of  
Coca-Cola and a  
mouth full of teeth,  
two big ears  
and a pipe that  
goes through my ears  
ear to ear.

Billy Ray Rogers  
Grade 3  
Lake View Elementary

I GOT A TV SET FOR A BRAIN--  
GROUP POEM

There is a horn inside  
a bunch of pipes beating together  
bones clinking  
there is a car driving in me  
into my legs, it stops.  
A man gets out and goes to my shoes  
GOODNIGHT  
He dreams about a giant,  
He jumps up  
He busts,  
He looks like a monkey grinning  
like a clown pretending he's a chicken  
He wakes up and goes to inside his brain  
gets inside the mouth  
that tongue was so good  
like jello-ice cream  
The giant knocks on the inside of Richard's head.  
And Richard dreams and goes for a drive  
to a creek  
inside of his own arm.  
He shakes,  
tickles his feet,  
his eyes go around like Alfalfa;  
his legs tremble;  
he falls down, wakes up inside  
his own eye ball.  
Richard blows up the moon through the sky to Pluto  
on Mars,  
it all blows down to pieces, the end of Richard's  
mustache, and he finally goes inside his own ear  
then to Venus, then to the sun,  
Richard burns up to ashes  
to ashes.

Mrs. Bell's Class  
Grade 3  
Latta Primary

## THE OLD MAN

There was an old man  
who was ninety-two.  
He couldn't even tie his shoe.  
Once he had a dream he was sitting  
on ice cream and when  
he work up he was  
holding a cup.

Christy Pelt  
Grade 4  
Latimer Elementary

There was a crooked man that had seven fingers  
And drew a straight picture of a cow  
spitting out milk.

And the cow turned into a Thanksgiving dinner,  
And then the lady turned into a haunted house,  
And the haunted house turned into a bony lady  
stuck to a steel board.

Keith Hare  
Grade 3  
Stewart Heights Primary

## THE DREAMING HORSE

Once there was a horse  
that dreamed he was poor.  
So when he woke up he  
told himself he was poor.  
He called his mother.  
He said, "Mother open your  
door. I have to tell you  
that we're poor."

"Oh, no we're not.  
Go back to bed.  
You had a nightmare."

So he closed the door and went back to bed.

Jeffrey Singleton  
Grade 4  
Gordon Elementary

## THE SUN'S DREAM

I dream I saw some little girls outside playing.  
I saw the little children's Mama calling them to  
come in to take a bath.

I saw an apple tree and I want some apples. Then  
the little children come outside and get me some apples.  
They get a long distance truck and they give me some  
apples.

They say, Here's your apples, little sun.  
And I say, Thank you. You better go back into the  
house or your Mama will beat you!

Millie Ann McCoy  
The Learning Center

## MY DREAM

I have a dream  
that I was babysitting  
and the baby cried  
(the baby was hungry)  
the Momma came home and fed it

...the house caught on fire  
and I went and got the baby  
out and took it home...  
and brought it upstairs  
and fed it and changed its diapers.

It had no name,  
but I named it Mary Ann Smith.

I gave it a bath  
and when my mother came home  
she didn't like it.  
But I said it didn't have a home  
so she let me keep it.

I put it in a buggy  
and took it to the cemetery  
just to take it for a walk...

Adrienne Lee  
The Learning Center

### CHASING ME

A ghost was chasing after me  
while I was flying a kite.  
I got some hot water  
and put it on his head and  
he started burning up!

He went after me again  
and I started running.

I hid in the woods  
and the ghost tried to find me,  
but didn't.

Tammy Locklear  
The Learning Center

### KING KONG'S HAND

I went into King Kong's hand. It felt furry.  
I could look down and see land. Soon he got mad  
because I pulled his hair out and he growled at  
me. I kept hanging on to him. He looked at me  
big-eyes. Soon he dropped me on land. When I got  
down my bones were broken all up.

Marcia Rouse  
Grade 3  
Lake View Elementary



POEM

The very first day I went to school  
it snowed  
I couldn't get inside,  
The whole school was filled with snow.

Rene Hamilton  
Grade 3  
East Primary

MY DRAWING: HOUSE, TREE, SKY

My house is a fool  
It dreams the whole day  
But the tree is lovelier  
than the house  
But the sky is dead old  
The sky is dead

Annie Johns  
Grade 5  
Gordon Elementary

## TRIPS

One day I went to the moon.  
I saw a Martian with no head.  
I ran away. I came back. I saw  
another Martian. Then I saw a  
two headed man. I said in my mind  
WHAT IS THAT. He said, you better  
go to earth before I kill you. I  
ran all the way to earth. It was  
two million years to get there. I  
was out of air. The man with two  
heads got there before I. He said,  
"You better go to another planet."  
I went to Mars. It was about 9 million  
years before I got there, and I did  
not see the man with two heads anymore.  
Then, I heard a noise. The man with two  
heads was there! He said, "You go to  
another planet!" So I went to Jupiter.  
It was 6 years before I got there,  
and I was safe again. I went home.

Jennifer Bethea  
Grade 3  
Latta Primary

THE PREGNANT ROCK  
A GROUP POEM

I am a pregnant rock. I had little rocks  
and the rocks had a tree, and the tree had  
a skunk and then a snake--All of us are  
married to the earth. I am the earth.  
I feel like a loaf of bread, soft like  
marshmallows. It's marshmallow. It tastes  
good to my babies. I put dogs & cats  
in the sky and then it rained beasts,  
it became ice and snowflakes. The ice  
turned into fish. Volcanoes started to roll  
and airplanes started to fly, everybody  
shooting at each other and then everybody  
shot at me and each other and then all were  
dead except me, the pregnant rock.  
Everything was quiet.

Ms. Richardson's Class  
Grade 3  
Stewart Heights Primary

SPINNING GLOBE

If I was a globe I would spin around  
and around like a spinning octopus.  
Then I would stop and throw myself  
in the fire alone and I would go up  
the chimney and I would float  
in the air and I would go to a graveyard  
and turn into a ghost and kill everybody  
and then I would die and I would rise  
from the dead like Dracula.

Ben Jackson  
Grade 3  
Latta Primary

THE EAGLE SAVED THE DAY--  
A GROUP POEM

I float on the steel eagle's back  
The eagle saw a fish  
and went zooming down  
and he missed it and he got  
a steel rock. Bullseye  
500

He broke his steel throat  
airplanes shot at him  
but they couldn't do much  
because the bullets bounced off  
his back, the eagle flew  
and grabbed his plane,  
and he said,  
YOU LEAVE ME ALONE  
and the plane crashed and  
it blew up everything and  
a man came out staggering  
with naked clothes  
and where the plane crashed  
the earth and the sky shook  
and it was like death,  
a volcano,  
houses began to fall  
and Eagle flew too low  
his wings, his nose, his legs,  
everything started to fall off.  
He falls apart and Jeff went  
out there and fixed the eagle up  
and then the eagle flew up--  
and the ugly sun made the eagle hot  
he looked like squash mixed with peanut butter  
the eagle melted into an old shining ball  
he splashed into the ocean  
and the water went so high

the waves beat up  
the water went off the edge of the land  
the earth flooded,  
the eagle saved the earth  
by digging through the planet  
to make the hole  
empty the water to China  
and that's how the eagle  
Like Noah  
saved the earth.

Jeff and Mrs. Lane's Class  
Grade 3  
Latta Primary

#### KING KONG

King Kong swallowed the sun  
the air smelled like something burning  
King Kong on fire,  
but he dashed on water,  
and said to sun  
if you don't leave me alone,  
I kill you,  
King Kong shot the sun  
and the sun burnt his legs two times,  
and then King Kong  
ate the sun again forever,  
They cut King Kong open,  
they cut the sun open,  
They got the sun,  
killed it.

Ronnie Wright  
Grade 3  
Stewart Heights Primary

My dream is about the number 8.

Eight is a lucky number. The eights in my dream are red, blue, black, white, purple and grey. Eight Land is in Germany - it is filled with eights. The houses are made of eights. Then a blue whale eats the beautiful city. Then someone builds a fire and the smoke makes him sneeze and he sneezes the Land of Eight out of him.

Ricky Bilsky  
Grade 5  
Latimer Elementary

DREAM (a drawing)

I am dreaming about the  
water with blood in it  
and no one can go swimming  
any more and it is running all over  
the world and the brown  
dirt is coming to the  
water with the blood in it.

Shirley Paige  
Grade 4  
Latimer Elementary



## SKY DREAMING OF RAIN

The sky is dreaming of rain  
because the sky is going broke

out with rain

it wanted to rain for a week already

Belinda Bethea  
Grade 5  
Latimer Elementary

## SKY DREAMS

The sky dreams  
that it could be down on earth  
like a person working in a factory  
making clothes

Lightning dreams  
about not hurting people

Andy Godbolt  
Grade 5  
Latimer Elementary

MY DREAM (her drawing)

My dream  
is about clouds  
and a green grass  
and a house  
a playground  
a sliding board, a merry  
go round and a  
see saw and  
birds in the sky.  
God is in it too.  
God is in the Left Hand  
side. He has a white  
robe on and He  
is on the swing set.  
And at night He is  
in my bedroom  
at night and He  
hears me at night  
praying

Dolly Turbeville  
Grade 5  
Latimer Elementary

## MAGIC

I am the sea.  
I would sway and sway.  
Things at the bottom of me.  
People come in me--  
Fish, rocks, boats, lots of things.

It is really beautiful.  
The trees started growing in me.  
The rocks started growing in me.  
Everything just kept on.

Then it was stopped. I was gone.  
Then the earth cracked.  
It was a terrible sight.  
Then a big herd of buffaloes stamped on me.  
Birds were flying away.  
Animals were going away.  
They hit the trees and everything.

Then I was there again.  
Then it was beautiful,  
just like before.

Ginger Cashwell  
Grade 3  
Stewart Heights Primary

## CREATION

Once there was an earth  
and the earth fell apart  
and some people died.  
And there was a sun  
and the sun fell apart,  
two little boys were in the moon  
and the boys got hurt.  
and then there was mars and mars fell apart,  
Two women fell in mars,  
and they died  
because they had a flu.

Nancy  
Grade 3  
Latta Primary

## MAGIC SNOWMAN

Once there was  
a head. He ran away  
and made a sun, then  
the sun ran away and  
made a moon, and the  
moon ran away  
and made an earth

The earth couldn't run away  
so he cried and cried  
and a magic snowman named Herman  
came along and said,  
"What's the matter?"

"I can't run away like the others."

"Well," the snowman said,  
"I'll make you some people."  
and the earth was so happy  
that he jumped up and down  
so much that he busted wide open.

Robin Jackson  
Grade 3  
Latta Primary

## EARTH GOING AROUND THE MOON

The earth moves around and around,  
Then it stops;  
All the planets stop;  
Something strange is going on.

It didn't move for a very long time.  
Then everything started  
It went faster and faster  
Then it stopped.

The planets all came together.  
Everyone started to fight.  
They fought with guns,  
They fought with cannons:  
Bang! Bang! Boom! Boom!

Fire and cannonballs everywhere.  
I hid in a ship until it was over.  
The planets started pulling apart,  
They were all apart.  
Everything started moving again.  
I was happy from then on.

Ginger Cashwell  
Grade 3  
Stewart Heights Primary



AFTER A PAINTING  
BY GENE DAVIS-

Flashing like strings  
Disappearing into space

Rene Hamilton  
Grade 3  
East Primary

MY CREATION

One day my Levis ran away  
They broke in half.  
They turned into the earth  
Then, they split into ten parts  
They changed into a sun...  
And some clouds.  
There was one rock  
It was very sick.  
It changed into dirty crabs.  
Then some fish.  
Then there were eight more planes  
then there was water.  
And then there was the good earth.

Monica Coleman  
Grade 3  
Latta Primary

THE DOG WAS MAGIC, OR--  
LONELY EARTH

There once was earth and he was lonely and he wanted a friend. So he saw some leaves on the ground and a dog came and the dog was made out of a leaf, and it was cut in two, into roots and dirt and cotton. And the earth got a friend. It was the dog. And the dog did not like the earth, so the dog wanted to be magic and he was magic. And the dog got him a friend. It was the sea and big monsters came out of the water. It was dinosaurs and elephants and snakes and big bugs and the dinosaurs busted open and made a sun, and the sun busted open and made planets. Pluto was too cold and Mercury was too hot, and so the earth was just right, and the magic dog made gas and the gas exploded and then there were people and the dog disappeared and the people made animals.

Heidi Skipper  
Grade 3  
Latta Primary

#### BULL HEADED WOMAN

The earth was rich and fertile  
then God made two cave people,  
who were Adam and Eve.  
Eve was a wicked and bull-headed woman.  
She believed in the devil.  
The devil told her to eat the apple  
from the unforgotten tree,  
and she ate it.  
The Lord turned them both into Martians.  
He gave them a rocket and told them  
to get off, and Adam and Eve created  
the sun and the planets  
and even another planet earth.

Sandra Page  
Grade 3  
Latta Primary

## REAL AND CRAZY RAIN

You feel soggy and soaked,  
flat and weak and sad and ugly  
and the rain falls down like stripes,  
like rainbows, different faces, colors,  
like a bordeau holding your  
rainbow hair back  
and the rain hard against the window  
looks like a jail house,  
makes

BANG BANG

CHUCK CHUCK

like a drum

BOOM BOOM

like thunder

BOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

And if that thunder don't quit  
I am gonna have a heart attack

the light hitting the window  
busted it open--

and a trader came and cut the gold rain,  
shared it  
with each man,  
and they went and stole the bank,  
which was the rainbow.

Mrs. Lucius' Class  
Grade 2  
Stewart Heights Primary

## AN ANGEL FLYING

An angel flying  
two Valentines  
two roses  
and a rainbow

The angel is flying to church  
The Valentines say Happy Valentine  
The white roses -- when you smell them you want them --  
(and)  
The rainbow is raining.

Pamela Denise Armstrong  
The Learning Center

## SNOW

Snow comes from  
squirrels sitting on trees.

Ashley Walters  
Grade 3  
East Primary

# WHEN MY DOG WAS LITTLE

When my dog was little  
She ran and played  
We had lots of fun  
But now she's no more fun at all  
Because she has children

Sarah Pouncey  
Grade 6  
Latimer Elementary

# GROUP POEM

I am a tree  
I stand in one place forever  
My hair brushes the clouds,  
A woodpecker pecks a hole--  
Inside, I would be sap turned into honey  
A bear climbing a tree  
He gets so full he falls,  
the beards eat the bear--  
The bumble bee drinks the ants,  
A lumberjack cuts me down  
I'm old and wrinkled,  
nothing left  
after it all.

Ms. Burchette's class  
Grade 3  
East Primary

## EXPLORING

I went  
exploring  
in the flowers  
and I fell.

It felt  
ghostly in the flowers.

I could hear the ghosts  
of people who made me feel bad.

Diane Harley  
Grade 4  
Gordon Elementary

## SHE

I dream of her  
I wish she was here  
I feel like a fool  
Crying for fear that she hates me

Jim Brown  
Grade 6  
Gordon Elementary

MY ADVENTURE IN THE SOUP BOWL

Me and my girlfriends fell in  
a soup bowl. It was weird.  
It had a bunch of words  
floating around. My girl  
got scared. I got scared  
and started hollering.  
All of the words said

LOVE KISS everything

Then my friends saved us.

Freddie Smith  
Grade 4  
Gordon Elementary

GOOD LUCK

If a dog smiles at you you will marry a rich man

Diane Crawford  
Grade 6  
Gordon Elementary



SUGAR

I am not talking about the sugar you eat.  
I am talking about love.  
My girlfriend's lips taste like sugar  
Her cheeks look like cherries and  
Her hair is black and beautiful.  
When I kiss her it blows my head  
'cross the Pacific Ocean.

Andrew Page  
Grade 5  
Lake View Elementary

### MY GIRLFRIENDS

I found my three girlfriends  
As pretty as can be  
They looked like a dream  
I turned into steam  
And then into a stream  
As nice as can be  
Flowing through rocks  
And dodging fish

Freddie Smith  
Grade 4  
Gordon Elementary

## LOVE

Love sometimes is an ugly word  
Especially when it doesn't want to be heard  
One day I was walking down the street  
Thinking of someone I would like to meet.  
All of a sudden - out of nowhere  
There popped up this ugly boy who looked like a bear.  
Once he said, "I love you."  
I said to him, "I know you do,  
but do you think that I love you?"  
You talk about someone running and running wild  
I've never known someone to run so fast  
as a child

Carolyn Campbell  
Grade 6  
Latimer Elementary

## MY FRIEND

I got a friend that's so ugly she  
became famous - she was the best  
in the pest business

Keith Wiggins  
Grade 4  
Latimer Elementary

### JUST US THREE

An old man came to my house. He asked my  
Name, so I told him. He  
Talked to my Mother.

No one was there but us three.  
On that Monday he died.

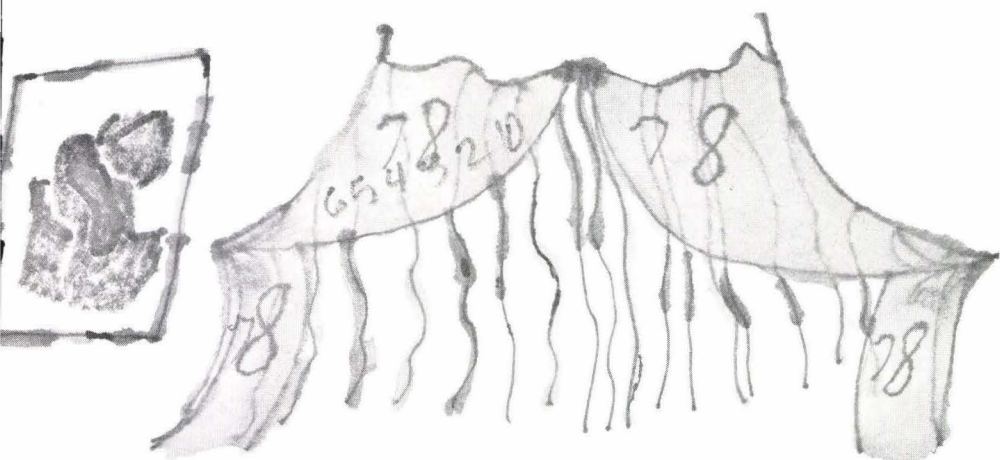
Now he is in the ground.  
Yes, we prayed for him to go to heaven.

Greg Hamilton  
Grade 4  
Lake View Elementary

### THE SLEEPING GIRL

Once there lived a lazy girl who never did  
anything but sleep. Her mother tried to get  
her up, but the girl socked her in the nose!  
So the mother cried. Then her son tried to  
get her up. And she slapped him and he cried.  
Then the dog tried to get her up, and she  
kicked him and he cried. So the dog went to  
get his master, the son's sister. She went  
in there and she had a hot pan ready to burn  
her with. Her sister tried to hit her, but  
she got burned by the hot pan. And she never  
went to sleep again.

Irene Norman  
Grade 5  
Latimer Elementary



There once was an old old wicked eye that never  
closed. And the man who had that old eye was a  
man who worked in a circus.

Poem and drawing by Michael Gasque,  
Stewart Heights Primary

## THE LION

Once there was a lion  
Who had a brown face and purple hair  
and a red neck.  
One day the sun was shining,

Worms started coming down from the  
sun,  
And then it started to snow fish  
and snakes.

And then it started raining babies  
And it started to rain airplanes,  
And then it started to snow on me!

One afternoon a monster came up  
from the ground  
It was a fat one, too  
He had stripes all over him,  
And he had gray hair and a big fat  
belly.

And the next day a flower was growing,  
and it was so pretty.  
I picked it and put it in a flower pot  
in my house by my window,  
And one day it died.  
And I cried and cried!

Rochelle Graves  
Grade 3  
Stewart Heights Primary

MISS FOOL,  
THE FOOL OF THE DEVIL

I am Miss Fool, the fool of the devil  
I be above the sun. I made the sun  
I like to take good people and burn them  
I am the fool, the fool. I hate people,  
I like to burn them up,  
I hate them, I hate them,  
I am the devil, devil, devil!!  
I hate them,  
I do I do I really do  
I hate people that's why  
I am the fool,  
the fool of the devil.

Tamia Bethea  
Grade 3  
Latta Primary

GUILT

God  
Undoes  
Indecency  
Leaving  
Trash

David Scott  
Grade 5  
Gordon Elementary

SOMEONE IN MY MIND

Someone in my mind  
I think of something in  
my mind        It is so big I wish  
I could hide it

Bridget Sirlena Burden  
Grade 4  
Latimer Elementary

MOTH

I am a strange moth  
that flies in the air  
I spin the hurricane.

Tracy Bethea  
Grade 3  
South Primary

EVERYTHING IS WORKING!

My brain is working  
my heart, beating my lungs.

Rene Hamilton  
Grade 3  
East Primary



## INSIDE

Do you know what is inside of me?  
There is an Indian playing a drum.

Ashley Walters  
Grade 3  
East Primary

## TO FEEL

like worms coming from my nose  
an octopus swimming in the sea  
I feel like a mummy waking up  
a snail creeping in my heart--  
Something crawling inside me,  
like a foul ball beating my head  
I feel like silver men  
growing silver in my eyes.

Angela Turbeville  
Grade 3  
South Primary

### GROWN UPS ALWAYS SAY

Wipe your feet  
Always be neat  
When you eat

Take out the trash  
Do you want taters  
or corn beef hash?

Feed the dog  
Wash the dishes  
And don't make any more wishes

Ann Carter  
Grade 5  
Lake View Elementary

### A FUNNY FEELING

I have a funny feeling inside me.  
I wonder what it is.  
It's so funny I laughed.  
I guess I keep it to cheer me up when I'm down.  
Here it comes again. hahaha

Paula Barfield  
Grade 4  
Lake View Elementary

## RAINY DAYS ARE DREARY

How sad I feel to see it rain  
Cause I know Mom will complaint.

Each time I come in the door  
Mom yells don't track mud on the floor.

I go sit in my room  
and read all afternoon.

Candice Bullock  
Grade 5  
Lake View Elementary

## THE BOOK

I am a book. You can read me.  
One day I was in a schoolroom,  
someone picked me up to read me  
and when they did, it hurt.  
Suddenly, she begins to open me.  
So I jumped out of her hands,  
and jumped back into a box  
and she ran after me.  
So I flew out the open window.  
So she jumped behind me.  
So I ran away and now I bet you  
the book looks like a pile of rags.

Nancy Jackson  
Grade 3  
Latta Primary

### THREE MEMORIES

#### MY THIRD BIRTHDAY

It was the first time I went into a Restaurant in Columbia. I ordered a coke. The lady brought it to me. Then I turned around. BAM! It fell. I thought I had killed it. But it was still alive.

Teresa McKenzie  
Grade 5  
Gordon Elementary

#### WHEN I WAS A KID

When I was a kid I got kissed and held by every person, Mother, child that came along. But of course I didn't like it. So when I didn't like it I would start to cry. But when I started to cry I would get a bottle in my mouth. And I didn't like that either.

Jeffrey Simpson  
Grade 5  
Gordon Elementary

#### WHEN I WAS A BABY

When I was a baby in my little cradle  
and I didn't want to sleep,  
My daddy spanked my legs.  
So I would hold my breath and turn blue.

Pam English  
Grade 5  
Gordon Elementary

## ONE WHO I MISS

I had a Grandmother who passed away  
and when she did I felt very sad.  
And the reason she died was her heart.  
It kept on beating and then it stopped and  
then it started beating again.

Now I miss my Grandmother.  
I miss her very much.

She showed me how to plant peas  
when I was young. She showed me how  
to plant flowers and corn and  
tomatoes and things like that.

I miss her very much.

Ray Galloway  
Grade 6  
Latimer Elementary

honey  
bee  
stung  
me I cry  
mother  
snuff  
sleep  
awake  
evening go back  
when bees  
are not there  
jar home  
eat bread  
kitchen  
bedroom  
sleep

Christopher Galloway  
Grade 6  
Latimer Elementary

POP CORN MACHINE

Words came  
like a pop corn machine  
I can't stop

Chris Paul  
Grade 3  
Stewart Heights Primary

MY FEELINGS

I feel like beating Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ in the head  
and cutting out his liver, gizzard, and chittlerlings.  
I feel like panicking, but Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_ said not  
to panic. I won't panic. But I will cry.

Anonymous  
Grade 5

AFTER A SLIDE OF A PAINTING  
BY JULES OLITSKY-

A hand  
in the sky  
reaching for the sun  
I grab, take it  
around and around.

Donna James  
Grade 3  
East Primary

MY HAND

My hand is like a star sitting in a chair.

Allen Hayes  
Grade 4  
Lake View Elementary

LITTLE TURTLE

Little  
turtle  
eat  
the  
eggs  
get  
the  
net  
from  
under  
the  
tree--  
don't  
say  
a  
word  
about  
the  
egg

Lynette Hood  
Grade 2  
East Primary



## I HAVE A PET TURTLE

I have a pet turtle. He got a big shell. He likes to go under the water and he snaps sticks and he loves worms and bugs. And he likes tadpoles and rats. And he loves snake-skin. He lives and loves.

And he got a big old tail and he got big old feet...and two eyes and one mouth and two noses and two ears. And he stays in the water. We feed him biscuits and meat and bones and milk.

He got on a log and he slipped and fell in the water. And I laughed at him. And he went somewhere. And he did never not come back again.

One day I saw him on the road and I took him and put him in the water.

And he got on the log and slipped and fell in the water again.

Wayne Campbell  
The Learning Center

AN ANT

An ant can crawl  
Nobody told him that he couldn't crawl  
Nó one has seen him, but  
I have seen him before because he has  
Eaten at my house

Zenia McLaughlin  
Grade 6  
Gordon Elementary

A BEE. A FLOWER

A bee in a flower  
sounds like an electric razor.  
The father bee goes and gets the honey  
and brings it back to his sugar pie.  
If the sugar is too sweet, she will jump  
on her feet.  
He brings the honey to Queen Bee  
Just so he can get a kiss and a big hug.  
The leaves of a flower are the arms.  
The sprout is the legs.  
Queen Bee hugs him with the leaves.  
She kicks with her stem.

Kenneth Leonard  
Grade 4  
Gordon Elementary

AFTER A SLIDE OF A PAINTING  
BY GENE DAVIS

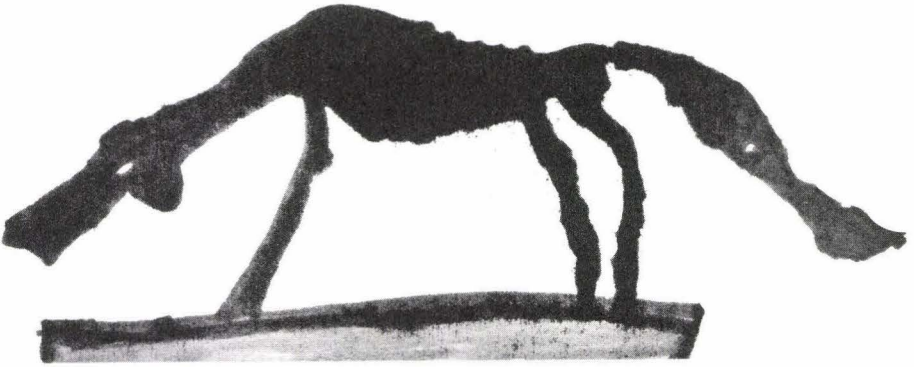
A zebra with colored stripes,  
"Quit Licking me!"  
NO-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O  
Came from a blinking stripe.

Stan Gibbons  
Grade 3  
East Primary

THE LEOPARD

His spots won't wash off;  
He eats birds;  
His teeth are little white hearts.

Shirl Carter and Sylvia Allen  
Grade 5  
Gordon Elementary



Drawing by Billy McKoy, East Primary

# FOX

He's the slightest thing you ever saw,  
Prancing along on his bright red paws,  
Tricking dogs every day.  
Why, he didn't mean to get in their way  
His tail, prancing in the air,  
With his bright red, snow white fluffy hair.

Robbie Snipes  
Grade 6  
Latimer Elementary

ACROSTIC POEM

The birds come and sing  
He walks in the grass and sings there too  
Even before summer he's singing his song

And when I wake up I look out the window and see it's Spring  
People walk in the streets in the evening  
Riding bicycles too  
In the afternoon I go outside and walk my dog  
Look at the birds there singing away

Singing sweet songs, and I ask them can they sing Dixie  
On the trees they sing  
Now they're on the rooftop singing all day  
Good-bye they'll sing when it's time to tuck in

Sheila Manning  
Grade 4  
Gordon Elementary

## A FLOWER WITHOUT WATER

At first I felt like a flower  
without water, then,  
at the end of the week,  
it was a flood on me.

Michael Leslie  
Grade 3  
Stewart Heights Elementary

## BLUNDERMAN

Blunderman  
Blunderman  
Blunderman  
I  
like  
Blunderman

Randy Dempsey  
Grade 3  
East Primary

### CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

If I were Christopher Columbus  
I would have destroyed the world.  
I would be the President  
I would be dead by now  
I would be bossen everybody,  
I would have pretty slaves  
I could save money.

Scotty Paul Allen  
Grade 3  
East Primary

### JUNK MAN

He lives in a junkyard.  
His eyes are like headlights on a car.  
His nose looks like an old rusty car.  
His mouth is bigger than a crane.  
His legs can reach to Mars.  
His arms are like shock absorbers.  
His neck is like an antenna on a car.  
He can talk louder than a CB radio  
and when he runs, he sounds like  
an old rusty car.

Bern Lewis  
Grade 4  
Latimer Elementary



## MOTORCYCLE RACE

Motorcycle motors!  
Oh when you bear down  
The town sounds like a growling hound  
Oh but the town is really like a pound  
Roaring.  
Come to this town so I can show  
You around. Then I  
Can rearup again  
Laying you out flat on the ground,  
Every day any way.

John Gray  
Grade 6  
Latimer Elementary

LATTA

Love is like a small feather  
close within itself.  
In morning it's like over-cast  
all at once,  
color and lost words,  
the night,  
it's like a person  
river  
coming to a stop.

Love is like a small feather  
close within itself.  
In morning it's like over-cast  
all at once,  
color and lost words,  
the night,  
it's like a person  
river  
coming to a stop.

Love is like a small feather  
close within itself.  
In morning it's like over-cast  
all at once,  
color and lost words,  
the night,  
it's like a person  
river  
coming to a stop.

CREATIVE WRITING FROM  
LATTA HIGH SCHOOL AND  
THE COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

## LATTA

Latta is like a small matchbox  
close within itself.  
In morning it's like over crowded,  
all of it,  
noise and lost schools,  
At night,  
it's like a peaceful  
river  
coming to a stop.

Isaiah S. Willis  
Grade 10  
Latta High

## CHANGES

Changes.....Changes.....Changes  
Things are not so real  
An eye on the universe  
What do you see  
the sun burning  
like a coal,  
closer.....closer. I am almost dead  
OOO.....AH, what pizazz  
Then what is like a dying daisy  
invaded by creatures from another place.  
Looking into a mirror.

Ray Alls  
Grade 12  
Latta High

### RAILROAD CROSS LIGHTS

Railroad cross lights  
big red eyes  
freak people out at 4 everyday  
It stands like a robot  
blinking,  
daring you to come further  
It stands alone  
although yellowed from age  
its long crayon like arms  
color your mind.

Wendy Pelt  
Grade 11  
Latta High

LATTA

Latta, are you really alive?  
When you wake up in the morning, it is quiet  
you can hear a dog barking about a mile away  
If you ever notice ants running  
It's children going to school.  
In the winter it is dead,  
deader than dead.  
You can walk a mile and just see two people  
The fall is like coming from the dead,  
You can start living a little,  
Everybody's trying to catch up--  
June is the best time of year,  
no more school for a while,  
Children running in the street,  
the people next door are rushing  
some people from the city come around,  
When school starts, you are just like a deer  
hybernating  
Latta is really alright in a way,  
but I wouldn't want to live there for the rest  
of my life.

Alvin Cade  
Grade 11  
Latta High

AFTER JULES OLITSKY  
--a slide show

My trip through space  
saw a sky  
who was a dictator

His friend, the tunnel,  
acted as he did,  
selfish and mean

Violence studied in the long battle

I sought peace  
through the emptiness  
of a hole,  
but it failed.

Michael Roberts  
Grade 12  
Latta High

A NUMBER NINE  
(After Jules Olitsky)

The bottomless pit  
Sun falling from sky to earth  
Look down a hole--  
A number nine  
a step into the future  
red ball thrown in the mud  
the way we will act  
when the world ends  
being outside  
sunburned out  
the end of the earth  
the look at death.

Lori Grainger  
Grade 10  
Latta High

AFTER WALLACE STEVENS  
SCENE FROM MY WINDOW

"At the earliest end of winter"

my white dreams  
only sheets  
where is the snow  
I see only  
wind--

papers snatched from books  
my beautiful aspects of winter  
have been disappointing  
now there are no thoughts from me

for the summer melts cold winter.

Kymeone Matthews  
Community Workshop  
Grade 9  
Dillon Junior High



THE SUN GOD ON THE LOTUS

Once breathing  
eyes of satin  
lips parched  
skin peeling  
upon an altar

Kymeone Matthews  
Community Workshop  
Grade 9  
Dillon Junior High

NOW IS REST

Sky circle large apple  
The sky not knowing  
strange force taking over  
while the daisy blooms dead

Rainbows reach the earth  
When all is scared away  
Now is the time for rest

Cathy Price  
Grade 9  
Latta High

AFTER KENNETH REXROTH  
THE GREAT BEAR'S DISAPPEARANCE

"The stars of the great bear drift apart"

held loosely by powdered skulls  
dust upon a greenless earth  
wild stallions  
roam in the valley of the dead man's eyes  
each star surrounded, alien,  
sneaking from the bear.

Kymeone Matthews  
Community Workshop  
Grade 9  
Dillon Junior High

AFTER ROBINSON JEFFERS  
INVISIBLE BLACKNESS

"The universe expands and contracts like a great heart"

we are drawn by its cold  
never ending blackness  
veiled across a woman's face

her wings closing upon  
a woman in red

her mouth closes,  
the atom of the man suspended--  
exploding, a force none can measure

the idea attempted countlessly  
by a yard stick,  
it never stretches far enough.

Kymeone Matthews  
Community Workshop  
Grade 9  
Dillon Junior High

DOWN THERE

after the Book of Kells

swinging from the chandelier  
forward, backward  
looking down  
the colors run dry  
their threads twinned together  
until they unweave--  
They make her feel  
as if they would grab her inside.  
the rug below--  
the circular, snail like patterns  
move around  
squinting with the sun

her eyes, puddles of water,  
heavy lids, velvet lashes  
slowly, painlessly

she has it all.

Kymeone Matthews  
Community Workshop  
Grade 9  
Dillon Junior High

## IMAGE

A bird with eyes like enormous  
balls of fire and wings like  
silky, black fans  
perched on a tree,  
watching a hairy monster  
with beady eyes  
climbing a limb.

Debra Cantey  
Grade 11  
Latta High

## AFTER WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

"These are the gardens of the desert, these"

these replicas  
individual grains  
clustered like the universe  
poems weaved in protection of the gods,  
like many molecules  
one large mass  
a regiment of sand grains,  
an army waiting the battle,  
These are the gardens of the desert, these.

Wendy Pelt  
Grade 11  
Latta High

by Margaret Rogers

For years I tried to get my husband to teach me how to change a tire. Always his answer was the same, "If you have a flat, drive until you can get to a safe place to have it changed. You have no business trying to change one yourself. A tire is much easier to replace than a head." He felt that a woman was not always safe with strangers who stopped under the guise of giving aid.

One day as I was leaving my Mother's home, I backed over my nephew's bicycle. He had ridden up behind my car and instead of leaving his bike standing upright, had just dropped it down behind the car. Of course, when I started to leave, I could see nothing in my way so you can imagine my consternation when I realized what had happened. With the bicycle lying on its side, the kick stand had been sticking straight up and punctured the tire and tube. The wheel of the bike was bent into a "U". Tire, tube, and bike were ruined.

There was no one near to change the tire for me. Mom lived in the country far from a service station and I would have to drive for ten miles or more to get home. I also knew that I still had to prepare the evening meal for my husband and son. Time was passing in a hurry. So, although I had had my orders, I decided that right then and there was a good time to try my hand at tire changing.

I had never jacked up a car and it was some experience trying to figure how the pieces of the jack went together so that it would fit under the car properly. After I finally succeeded in getting the car jacked up, the next thing was the lug bolts. Some great big lug of a man had put them on so tight that I almost never got them loose. I tried kicking the wrench with my foot to break the seal loose and had no luck at all. I finally got a hammer and by banging

with all my strength managed to break them loose enough to get them off. I was huffing and puffing as though I had been running a flat foot race.

I didn't have much trouble getting the torn up tire off after getting the lug bolts loose; but getting the spare out of the trunk of the car was another story completely. This was a mean job. I weighed 107 pounds, fully dressed, and the spare felt as if it weighed as much as I did, if not more. I pulled and tugged with all my might and when I did get it out of the trunk, I felt as if my arms were being pulled out of my shoulder sockets. When I tried to lift the wheel in place on the axle of the car, I couldn't do that and turn it so that the holes were in the right place at the same time. It was try and try again before I had any success. I wasn't sure if the spare had any air in it so I almost held my breath when I let the jack down. All seemed well. So with the torn up tire and jack in place in the trunk, I set out for home.

I drove home feeling really proud of myself because I felt that I had really accomplished quite a task, and had done an excellent job at it. Not for anything would I have admitted to my husband just what a chore it had been.

When I got home, much to my surprise my husband didn't erupt as much as I had expected. He listened to my excuse for being late without too much comment.

"You'll have to have a spare before you go to work tomorrow," he stated quite calmly. "I'll go get one while you are preparing supper."

His brother had a Service Station across the river from our house. If you took the short cut through the river swamp, it was only about fifteen miles. If you went the main road, it was about twenty-five or thirty miles.

The swamp area on each side of the river was called Buck Swamp. It was wide and dark. The trees overlapped enough in places that you could hardly see the sky. Day time travel on the river road was scary enough. Night was



worse. The road was not paved and was sandy and narrow. There were no houses from one side of the swamp to the other. It just wasn't a good road to travel alone at anytime. This of course, to save time, was the road that Bill took.

With one eye on the clock, I was scurrying around trying to get my supper cooked so that there would be no waiting when Bill got back. I figured that I had pushed my luck far enough and for the balance of the evening I had better walk very carefully.

Does he sound like a bear? Well, he wasn't really, but he surely could make noises sometimes. . . And when he acted with the studied calmness that he had used before he left the house, I knew that an explosion could very easily follow.

Sometime later, I'm not sure how much, the phone rang. When I answered, I thought surely that Donald Duck was calling. Wa---nk--Wa---nk--Wa---nk!! I had to hold the phone away out from my ear.

I knew immediately who was calling, but it was some time before he quieted down enough for me to know why he was calling.

"Tell Buster Bill (our son) to take the pickup and come get me," he roared.

"Where are you?" I asked him.

"In the river swamp!" he whooped.

"In the river swamp? Why there? What's wrong?" I tried to keep my voice calm and matter-of-fact, hoping to ward off any more of an explosion than I had already heard.

"That tire you changed! The whole blankitty---blank--blank--blank--wheel is off in the river swamp. You



didn't tighten the lug bolts enough and the blankitty-blank--wheel ran off!"

"If the tire ran off in the river swamp, where are you calling from?" I questioned cautiously.

"From the Puckett Place, and I walked every step of the way. If you hadn't been so smart, none of this would have happened."

I knew that the Puckett Place was the first house on the other side of the swamp.

"Don't fuss at me," I told him. "You should have had gumption enough to check my work before you drove off. You knew that it was my first experience at changing a tire."

Of course, that remark plus the fact that he had walked several miles through the dark river road to a phone didn't help matters any at all. It was dark by the time he had started walking and he didn't have a flashlight with him.

If I had been along, I'm sure he probably would have carried me back to the river and dunked me.

When Buster Bill reached him they had to find the wheel that was out in the swamp. (Did you know that a wheel will continue to roll in a forward motion when it comes off the axle?)

It isn't very easy to find something like a wheel in a swamp in the dark with nothing but a small flashlight to see by. Of course, the fact that the swamp was snake infested, mosquito infested and briar infested did not make the job any easier. It was also summertime and the weather was hot. Combine hot summer weather with sizzling inner heat and you have a perfect combination for blowing a fuse.

And then--when they had fished the wheel out of the swamp--they found that it was ruined. There were four great big round holes where the lug bolts had worn

through the rim. Not only a tire gone, but a wheel also! The good time was on the bad rim--the bad tire on the good rim. Things were really piling up and I was on my way to being beneath it all.

The two offending objects had to be carried to the service station, in the pickup, to be repaired. The car, still stalled in the swamp was waiting patiently on three legs. It, of course, could not be moved until the men got back with the wheel and tire. The road was narrow enough so that if anyone else came by they had a hard time getting past the stalled car.

It was getting rather late when everything was taken care of and the men got home.

I really don't remember very much of what was said when they got home. I don't even remember if the meal that I had prepared was eaten. When I think back to that night, I draw a complete mental block about our conversation--except for a very careful replay of what took place in the swamp.

The next morning, when I went out of the house to go to work, the holey wheel had been very carefully positioned against a pecan tree. It was placed in such a way that I could not walk out my front door without seeing it.

"You're not planning to leave that wheel there are you?" I asked my husband.

"Don't you dare move it," he warned me. "It's there to remind you not to try changing a tire, ever again. You'll learn to leave well enough alone."

I don't remember that the word obey was in our marriage vows, but I'm sure that Bill thought it was.

When I moved away almost two years later, that rim was still there, propped against the trunk of that pecan tree.

It has been over fifteen years since all of this took place and I've never been tempted to change a flat tire

again. I'll take my chances with that kind soul who says, "Having trouble, Lady? Never mind, I'll change it for you. A woman has no business trying to change a flat." I'll be glad to take him at his word.

#### ABOUT THE POETS IN RESIDENCE

JOANNA CATTONAR worked as Poet in Residence in Elloree, Oconee County and Dillon County Total Arts Programs during the 1976-77 school year.

She holds a B.A. Degree in English from Vassar College and an M.A. Degree from Cornell University. She has taught writing courses at Western Michigan in Kalamazoo and at New Mexico Highlands University in Taos.

Formerly a resident of Taos, Ms. Cattonar came to South Carolina for the first time last Spring to tape programs for SC-ETV's Writer in Residence Program. These tapes, which will be aired during 1977, include Ms. Cattonar's reading her own work and reading stories for young people by other writers.

SHAUN FARRAGHER, a graduate of Columbia University and recipient of the M.A. Degree in Creative Writing from the City College of City University of New York, worked as Poet in Residence in Dillon County and Greenwood Total Arts Programs and as visiting poet in Clinton and Laurens schools during the 1976-77 school year.

He has been active since 1973 in Poets in the Schools Programs in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

Mr. Farragher is widely published in magazines and anthologies; his most recent book, Narratives of the New Netherlands, will be published this year by the Hudson River Press.

Both poets' residencies in South Carolina are sponsored by the South Carolina Arts Commission and funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and participating school and community sponsors.

PHEASANT: from the El Capitan

--by then I had swallowed the Prairie  
a day long feast of manifest  
destiny sunk to my teeth  
in staring--

when it flew  
at me, broke, and stood wild  
in the Kansas furrow and burned  
  
the blue dim glint of my heart  
caught and roared out of its dim blue dreaming  
  
as if you had touched me again  
  
the long long searched for,  
the unhunted

found

Joanna Cattonar

(Note: published in Open Places)



FINDING THE RIGHT WORDS

The sky pours out

Like water, stars

twist finbacked

in a net of trees

my thought pours

out like skysurf

all my words

rush the net

fish glimmer

eyes wide to darkness

every word

every star

an eye

Joanna Cattonar

(Note: published in somewhat different form in Niobe)

## GRANDFATHER TOM

for Tom Farragher

I wrote "Grandfather Tom" to make my grandfather live for other people. The writing of the poem helped me rediscover how I should try to live.

In an early draft of the poem, I wrote, "Tom, you never graduated from any school/you drove a trolley car and a bus/you taught me how to love." I didn't use this line in the published version of the poem, for a poem should show, rather than say, its meaning. This line says what was in my mind when I wrote the poem. Each series of images shows how I remember his gentleness, and how he helped me become my own person.

A real part of poetry and its teaching is this internal search for the conversation of the self.

I stumble through the twigs  
to reach your grave

I need some talk,  
some bits of string,  
some knots untied

I remember our home -  
the dog I rode when three,  
the daffodils, crocus,  
forsythia, mock orange

the blue bachelor's buttons  
strung through your lapel

each June I see again the  
red porch with the paint  
and oil smell,  
I think of lemons

I loved your green swinging couch

continued 95

as I sit among the graves  
the rains begin  
then

I was eight  
standing by the Chesterfields  
near your favorite chair

often, I would watch you  
walk down our hill,  
newspaper under arm,  
and then,  
the snow began,

and we sled and sled  
until we wet our drawers

we fell home  
and you made some tea,  
smoked a cigarette,  
and then  
we wrestled

and you read to me of mars  
or saturn's men  
until I yawned asleep,  
your white hair  
blurred by the motions  
of your fingers tucking  
me under grandma's quilt

as I leave your grave  
the rain stops,  
and we walk up that hill  
on your last day.  
then, the bus came,  
took you away,  
and you waved smiles through the glass,  
and the roar of the bus stopped,  
and we could not touch

I am never able to walk down that hill  
and not see you with your newspaper  
under your arm,  
and the silence each Christmas  
is sad even when the family gathers  
with new children



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